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ROMANS 5

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS[4]	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Results of Justification	Faith Triumphs in Trouble	Consequences of Justification	Right With God	Faith Guarantees Salvation
5:1-11	5:1-5	5:1-5	5:1-5	5:1-11
	Christ in Our Place			
	5:6-11	5:6-11	5:6-11	
Adam and Christ	Death in Adam, Life in Christ	Adam and Christ; Analogy and Contrast	Adam and Christ	Adam and Jesus Christ
5:12-14	5:12-21	5:12-14	5:12-14b	5:12-14
			5:14c-17	
5:15-21		5:15-17		5:15-21
		5:18-21	5:18-19	
			5:20-21	

READING CYCLE THREE (see "Bible Interpretation Seminar")
FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT PARAGRAPH LEVEL

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects (reading cycle #3). Compare your subject divisions with the five translations above. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS

A. Verses 1-11 are one sentence in Greek. They continue to develop Paul's pivotal theological concept of "Justification by grace through Faith" (cf. Rom. 3:21-4:25).

B. Possible outlines of Rom. 5:1-11 to show the theological development:

Verses 1-5 **Verses 6-8** **Verses 9-11**

1. benefits of salvation	1. basis for salvation	1. future certainty of salvation
2. subjective experiences of justification	2. objective facts of justification	2. future certainty of justification
3. justification	3. progressive sanctification	3. glorification
4. anthropology	4. theology	4. eschatology

C. Verses 12-21 are a discussion of Jesus as the second Adam (i.e., Adam – Christ typology; cf. 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45-49; Phil. 2:6-8). It gives emphasis to the theological concepts of both individual sin and corporate guilt. Paul's development of mankind's (and creation's) fall in Adam was so unique and different from the rabbis (who developed their doctrine of sin from Genesis 6), while his view of corporality was very much in line with rabbinical teaching. It showed Paul's ability under inspiration to use or supplement the truths he was taught during his training in Jerusalem under Gamaliel (cf. Acts 22:3; see Appendix of Alfred Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*).

The Reformed Evangelical doctrine of original sin from Genesis 3 was developed by Augustine and Calvin. It basically asserts that humans are born sinful (total depravity) with no possibility of choice. Often Psalm 51:5; 58:3; and Job 15:14; 25:4 are used as OT proof-texts.

The alternate theological position that humans are progressively, morally and spiritually, responsible for their own choices and destiny was developed by Pelagius and Arminius. There is some evidence for their view in Deut. 1:39; Isa. 7:15; and Jonah 4:11; John 9:41; 15:22,24; Acts 17:30; Rom. 4:15. The thrust of this theological position would be that children are innocent until an age of moral responsibility (for the rabbis this was 13 years old for boys and 12 years old for girls).

There is a mediating position in which both an innate evil propensity and an age of moral responsibility are both true! Evil is not only corporate, but a developing evil of the individual self to sin (life progressively more and more apart from God). The wickedness of humanity is not the issue (cf. Gen. 6:5,11-12,13; Rom. 3:9-18,23), but the when, at birth or later in life? I prefer this last view!

D. There have been several theories about the implications of Rom. 5:12
1. all people die because all people choose to sin (Pelagius)
2. Adam's sin affected the entire creation and, thereby, all die (Rom. 5:18-19, Augustine)
3. in reality it is probably a combination of original sin and volitional sin

E. Paul's comparison "just as" begun in Rom. 5:12 is not finished until Rom. 5:18. Verses 13-17 form a theological parenthesis, which is so characteristic of Paul's writings.

F. Remember Paul's presentation of the gospel, Rom. 1:18-8:39, is one sustained argument. The whole must be seen in order to properly interpret and appreciate the parts.

G. Martin Luther has said of Romans 5, "In the whole Bible there is hardly another chapter which can equal this triumphant text."

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 5:1-5

[1]Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, [2]through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. [3]And not only this, but

we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; [4]and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; [5]and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

5:1 "therefore" This word often signaled

1. the summary of the theological argument up to this point
2. the conclusions based on this theological presentation
3. the presentation of new truth (cf. Rom. 5:1; 8:1; 12:1)

▣ **"having been justified"** This is an AORIST PASSIVE PARTICIPLE; God has justified believers. This is placed first in the Greek sentence (Rom. 5:1-2) for emphasis. There seems to be a time sequence in Rom. 5:1-11.

1. Rom. 5:1-5, our current experience of grace
2. Rom. 5:6-8, Christ's finished work on our behalf
3. Rom. 5:9-11, our future hope and assurance of salvation

See outline, B. in Contextual Insights.

The OT background (remember the NT authors are Hebrew thinkers writing in street Greek) of the term "justified" (*dikaioō*) was a "straight edge" or "measuring reed." It came to be used as imagery of God Himself. God's character—holiness, is the only standard of judgment (cf. LXX of Lev. 24:22; and theologically in Matt. 5:48). Because of Jesus' sacrificial, substitutionary death (cf. Isaiah 53), believers have a legal (forensic) positional standing before God (see note at Rom. 5:2). This does not imply the believer's lack of guilt, but rather something like amnesty. Someone else has paid the penalty (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21). Believers have been declared forgiven (cf. Rom. 5:9,10).

SPECIAL TOPIC: RIGHTEOUSNESS

▣ **"by faith"** Faith is the hand that accepts the gift of God (cf. Rom. 5:2; Rom. 4:1ff). Faith does not focus on the degree or intensity of the believer's commitment or resolve (cf. Matt. 17:20), but on the character and promises of God (cf. Eph. 2:8-9). The OT word for "faith" originally referred to one in a stable standing posture. It came to be used metaphorically for someone who was loyal, dependable, and trustworthy. Faith does not focus on our faithfulness or trustworthiness, but on God's.

SPECIAL TOPIC: BELIEVE, TRUST, FAITH AND FAITHFULNESS (OT)

SPECIAL TOPIC: FAITH, BELIEVE, OR TRUST

▣ **"we have peace"** There is a Greek manuscript variant here. This VERB is either a PRESENT ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE (*echōmen*, MSS א*, A, B*, C, D) or a PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE (*echomen*, MSS א[1], B[2], F, G). This same grammatical ambiguity is found in Rom. 5:1, 2, 3.

1. If it is the SUBJUNCTIVE it would be translated "let us continue enjoying peace" or "keep on enjoying peace" (see Williams Translation).
2. If it is the INDICATIVE then it would be translated "we have peace."

The context of Rom. 5:1-11 is not exhortation, but declaration of what believers already are and have through Christ. Therefore, the VERB is probably PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE (note this is not the oldest MSS choice), "we have peace." The USB[4] gives this option an "A" rating (certain).

Many of our ancient Greek manuscripts were produced by one person reading a text and several others making copies. Words that were pronounced alike were often confused. Here is where context and sometimes the writing style and usual vocabulary of the author helps make the translation decision easier.

SPECIAL TOPIC: TEXTUAL CRITICISM

▣ **"peace"** See SPECIAL TOPIC: PEACE (*eirēne*, NT)

▣ **"with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"** Jesus is the agency (*dia*, cf. Rom. 5:2,9,11,17,21; of the Spirit in Rom. 5:5) which brings peace with God. Jesus is the only way to peace with God (cf. John 10:7-8; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5). For the terms in the title "Lord Jesus Christ" see notes at Rom. 1:4.

5:2 "we have obtained our introduction" This VERB is PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE; it speaks of a past act which has been consummated and now results in a state of being.

The term "introduction" literally meant "access" or "admission" (*prosagōgē*, cf. Eph. 2:18; 3:12). It came to be used as imagery for

1. being personally introduced to royalty
2. being brought safely into a harbor (cf. 1 Pet. 3:18)

This phrase contains a Greek manuscript variant. Some ancient manuscripts added "by faith" (cf. א^{*2}, C, as well as some Old Latin, Vulgate, Syriac, and Coptic versions). Other manuscripts add a PREPOSITION "by faith" (cf. א^{1}, A, and some Vulgate versions). However, the uncial manuscripts B, D, F, and G omit it altogether. It seems that scribes simply filled out the parallelism of Rom. 5:1 and 4:16 (twice), 19, and 20. "By faith" is Paul's recurrent theme!

▣ **"into this grace"** This term (*charis*) meant God's undeserved, no-strings-attached, unmerited love (cf. Eph. 2:4-9). It is clearly seen in Christ's death on behalf of sinful mankind (cf. Rom. 5:8).

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHARACTERISTICS OF ISRAEL'S GOD (OT)

▣ **"in which we stand"** This is another PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE; literally "we stand and continue to stand." This reflects believers' theological position in Christ and their commitment to remain in the faith which combines the theological paradox of God's sovereignty (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1) and human's free will (cf. Eph. 6:11, 13,14).

SPECIAL TOPIC: STAND *(HISTĒMI)*

▣ **"we exult"** This grammatical form can be understood as

1. a PRESENT MIDDLE (deponent) INDICATIVE, "we exult"
2. a PRESENT MIDDLE (deponent) SUBJUNCTIVE, "let us exult" (Williams translation)

Scholars are split on these options. If one takes "we have" in Rom. 5:1 as an INDICATIVE then the translation should be consistent through Rom. 5:3.

The root of the word "exult" is "boasting" (NRSV, JB). Believers do not exult in themselves (cf. Rom. 3:27), but in what the Lord has done for them (cf. Jer. 9:23-24). This same Greek root is repeated in Rom. 5:3 and 11.

SPECIAL TOPIC: BOASTING

▣ **"in hope of"** Paul often used this term (see SPECIAL TOPIC: HOPE) in several different but related senses. See note at Rom. 4:18. Often it was associated with the consummation of the believer's faith. This can be expressed as glory, eternal life, ultimate salvation, Second Coming, etc. The consummation is certain, but the time element is future and unknown. It was often associated with "faith" and "love" (cf. 1 Cor. 13:13; Gal. 5:5-6; Eph. 4:2-5; 1 Thess. 1:3; 5:8). A partial list of some of Paul's uses follows.

1. The Second Coming, Gal. 5:5; Eph. 1:18; Titus 2:13
2. Jesus is our hope, 1 Tim 1:1
3. The believer to be presented to God, Col. 1:22-23; 1 Thess. 2:19
4. Hope laid up in heaven, Col. 1:5

5. Ultimate salvation, 1 Thess. 4:13
6. The glory of God, Rom. 5:2; 2 Cor. 3:12; Col. 1:27
7. Assurance of salvation, 1 Thess. 5:8-9
8. Eternal life, Titus 1:2; 3:7
9. Results of Christian maturity, Rom. 5:2-5
10. Redemption of all creation, Rom. 8:20-22
11. A title for God, Rom. 15:13
12. Adoption's consummation, Rom. 8:23-25
13. OT as guide for NT believers, Rom. 15:4

SPECIAL TOPIC: ASSURANCE

▣ **"glory of God"** This phrase is an OT idiom for the personal presence of God. This referred to the believer's standing before God in the faith-righteousness provided by Jesus on Resurrection Day (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21). It is often called by the theological term "glorification" (cf. Rom. 5:9-10; 8:30). Believers will share the likeness of Jesus (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 John 3:2; 2 Pet. 1:4).

SPECIAL TOPIC: GLORY (*DOXA*, NT)

SPECIAL TOPIC: GLORY (*KABOD*, OT)

5:3

NASB	**"and not only this, but"**
NKJV	**"and not only *that*, but"**
NRSV	**"and not only that, but"**
TEV	**———**
NJB	**"not only that"**
REB	**"more than this"**
Peshitta	**"and not only so, but"**

Paul uses this combination of terms several times (cf. Rom. 5:3,11; 8:23; 9:10, and 2 Cor. 8:19).

▣

NASB	**"we also exult in our tribulations"**
NKJV, Peshitta	**"we also glory in tribulations"**
NRSV	**"we also boast in our sufferings"**
TEV	**"we also boast in our troubles"**
NJB	**"let us exult, too, in our hardships"**
REB	**"we even exult in present sufferings"**

If the world hated Jesus, it will hate His followers (cf. Matt. 10:22; 24:9; John 15:18-21). Jesus was matured, humanly speaking, by the things He suffered (cf. Heb. 5:8). Suffering produces trust and maturity. Christlikeness is the plan of God for every believer, suffering is part of it (cf. Rom. 8:17-19; Acts 14:22; James 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 4:12-19)!

SPECIAL TOPIC: WHY DO CHRISTIANS SUFFER?

▣ **"knowing"** This is a PERFECT PARTICIPLE, of "*oida*." It is PERFECT in form, but it functions as a PRESENT TENSE. Believers' understanding of the truths of the gospel as they relate to suffering allows them to face life with a joy and confidence which is not dependent on circumstances, even during persecution (cf. Phil. 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:16,18). Believers exult "in" tribulations, not "because of" them!

5:3 "tribulation" See SPECIAL TOPIC: TRIBULATION

SPECIAL TOPIC: WHY DO CHRISTIANS SUFFER?

5:3,4 "perseverance" This term meant "voluntary," "active," "steadfast," "endurance." It was a term that related to both patience with people, as well as with circumstances.

SPECIAL TOPIC: PERSEVERE

5:4	
NASB	**"proven character"**
NKJV, NRSV	**"character"**
TEV	**"God's approval"**
NJB	**"tested character"**

In the LXX of Gen. 23:16; 1 Kgs. 10:18; 1 Chr. 28:18 this term was used of testing metals for purity and genuineness (cf. 2 Cor. 2:9; 8:2; 9:13; 13:3; Phil. 2:22; 2 Tim. 2:15; James 1:12). God's tests are always for strengthening (cf. Heb. 12:10-11)!

SPECIAL TOPIC: GREEK TERMS FOR TESTING

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHRISTIAN GROWTH

SPECIAL TOPIC: GOD TESTS HIS PEOPLE (OT)

5:5 "hope does not disappoint" This may be an allusion to an Hebrew idiom (i.e., shame, cf. Ps. 25:3,20; 31:1,17; 119:116; Isa. 28:16 [quoted in Rom. 9:33]; Phil. 1:20).

SPECIAL TOPIC: HOPE

▣ **"because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts"** This is a PERFECT PASSIVE INDICATIVE; literally, "God's love has been and continues to be poured out." This VERB was often used of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 2:17,18,33; 10:45 and Titus 3:6), which may reflect Joel 2:28-29 (Isa. 32:15).
SPECIAL TOPIC: POURED OUT

The GENITIVE PHRASE, "the love of God" grammatically can refer to (1) our love for God or (2) God's love for us (cf. John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:14). Number two is the only contextual option.

SPECIAL TOPIC: HEART

▣ **"the Holy Spirit that was given to us"** This is an AORIST PASSIVE PARTICIPLE. The PASSIVE VOICE is often used to express God's agency. This implies that believers do not need more of the Spirit. They either have the Spirit or they are not Christians (cf. Rom. 8:9). The giving of the Spirit was the sign of the New Age (cf. Joel 2:28-29), the New Covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-32).

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE PERSONHOOD OF THE SPIRIT

SPECIAL TOPIC: SPIRIT (GIFT OF)

▣ Notice the presence of the three divine persons of the Trinity in this paragraph.

1. God, Rom. 5:1,2,5,8,10
2. Jesus, Rom. 5:1,6,8,9,10
3. the Spirit, Rom. 5:5

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE TRINITY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 5:6-11

[6]For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. [7]For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. [8]But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. [9]Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath *of God* through Him. [10]For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. [11]And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

5:6

NASB, REB	**"for while we were still helpless"**
NKJV	**"for when we were still without strength"**
NRSV	**"for while we were still weak"**
TEV	**"for when we were still helpless"**
NJB	**"when we were still helpless"**
Peshitta	**"because of our weakness"**

This VERB is a PRESENT PARTICIPLE. This referred to mankind's fallen Adamic nature. Humans are powerless against sin. The PRONOUN "we" explains and parallels the descriptive NOUN in Rom. 5:6b "ungodly," Rom. 5:8 "sinners," and Rom. 5:10 "enemies." Verses 6 and 8 are theologically and structurally parallel.

Note the parallelism:

	①	②	③
v. 6	we were helpless	Christ died for the ungodly	---
v. 8	we were sinners	Christ died for us	---
v. 9	---	by his blood	having now been justified
v. 10	we were enemies	the death of His Son	have received the reconciliation

The main truths are paralleled (i.e., Hebrew poetry) for emphasis.

1. our need
2. Christ's provision
3. our new standing

SPECIAL TOPIC: HEBREW POETRY

▣

NASB, NRSV	**"at the right time"**
NKJV	**"in due time"**
TEV	**"at the time that God chose"**
NJB	**"at his appointed moment"**
REB	**"at the appointed time"**
Peshitta	**"at this time"**

This could refer historically to

1. the Roman peace (and roads) allowing free travel
2. the Greek language allowing cross cultural communication
3. the demise of the Greek and Roman gods producing an expectant, spiritually hungry world (cf. Mark 1:15; Gal. 4:4; Eph. 1:10; Titus 1:3)

Theologically the incarnation was a planned, divine event (cf. Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; Eph. 1:11).

5:6,8,10 "died for the ungodly" This is an AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE. It viewed Jesus' life and death as a unified event. "Jesus paid a debt He did not owe and we owed a debt we could not pay" (cf. Gal. 3:13; 1 John 4:10).

The death of Christ was a recurrent theme in Paul's writings. He used several different terms and phrases to refer to Jesus' substitutionary death.

1. "blood" (cf. Rom. 3:25; 5:9; 1 Cor. 11:25,27; Eph. 1:7; 2:13; Col. 1:20)
2. "gave Himself up" (cf. Eph. 5:2,25)
3. "delivered up" (cf. Rom. 4:25; 8:32)
4. "sacrifice" (cf. 1 Cor. 5:7)
5. "died" (cf. Rom. 5:6; 8:34; 14:9,15; 1 Cor. 8:11; 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:15; Gal. 5:21; 1 Thess. 4:14; 5:10)
6. "cross" (cf. 1 Cor. 1:17-18; Gal. 5:11; 6:12-14; Eph. 2:16; Phil. 2:8; Col. 1:20; 2:14)
7. "crucifixion" (cf. 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2; 2 Cor. 13:4; Gal. 3:1)

Does the PREPOSITION *huper* in this context mean

1. representation, "on our behalf"
2. substitution, "in our place"

Normally the basic meaning of *huper* with the GENITIVE is "on behalf of" (Louw and Nida). It expresses some advantage that accrues to persons (*The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3, p. 1196). However, *huper* does have the sense of *anti*, which denotes "in the place of," thereby theologically referring to a vicarious substitutionary atonement (cf. Mark 10:45; John 11:50; 18:14; 2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Tim. 2:6). M. J. Harris (NIDNTT, vol. 3, p. 1197) says, "but why does Paul never say that Christ died *anti hēmōn* (1 Tim. 2:6 is the nearest he comes—*antilutron huper pantōn*)? Probably because the prep. *huper*, unlike *anti*, could simultaneously express representation and substitution."

M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*, vol. 2, says

> "It is much disputed whether *huper*, on behalf of, is ever equivalent to *anti*, instead of. The classical writers furnish instances where the meanings seem to be interchanged. . .The meaning of this passage, however, is so uncertain that it cannot fairly be cited in evidence. The preposition may have a local meaning, *over* the dead. None of these passages can be regarded as decisive. The most that can be said is that *huper* borders on the meaning of *anti*. *Instead of* is urged largely on dogmatic grounds. In the great majority of passages the sense is clearly *for the sake of*, *on behalf of*. The true explanation seems to be that, in the passages principally in question, those, namely, relating to Christ's death, as here, Gal. 3:13; Rom. 14:15; 1 Pet. 3:18, *huper* characterizes the more indefinite and general proposition–Christ died on behalf of–leaving the peculiar sense of in behalf of undetermined, and to be settled by other passages. The meaning *instead of* may be included in it, but only inferentially" (p. 692).

5:7 This verse shows human love while verse 8 shows God's love!

▣

NASB, NKJV, TEV	**"for a righteous man"**
NRSV	**"for a righteous person"**
NJB	**"for a good man"**
REB	**"even for a just man"**

Peshitta "for the sake of the good"

This term was used in the same sense as Noah and Job were righteous or blameless men. They followed the religious requirements of their day. It does not imply sinlessness.

SPECIAL TOPIC: BLAMELESS, INNOCENT, GUILTLESS, WITHOUT REPROACH

5:8 "God demonstrates His own love" This is a PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE (cf. Rom. 3:5). The Father sent the Son (cf. Rom. 8:3,32; 2 Cor. 5:19). God's love is not sentimental, but action-oriented (cf. John 3:16; 1 John 4:10) and constant.

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHARACTERISTICS OF ISRAEL'S GOD (OT)

▣ **"in that while we were yet sinners"** It shocks us to realize that God's love was manifest to "sinners," not godly people or people of a particular national origin, but rebels! Grace, not merit, is the foundational truth! God still desires fellowship with humans. It is His unchanging character that gives us peace and hope (cf. Exod. 34:6; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 103:8; 145:8).

5:9 "much more" This was one of Paul's favorite expressions (cf. Rom. 5:10,15,17). If God loved believers so much while they were yet sinners, how much more does He love them now that they are His children (cf. Rom. 5:10; 8:22).

▣ **"having now been justified"** This is an AORIST PASSIVE PARTICIPLE, which emphasized justification as a completed act accomplished by God. Paul is repeating the truth of Rom. 5:1. Also note the parallelism between the terms "justified" (Rom. 5:9) and "reconciled" (Rom. 5:10-11).

▣ **"by His blood"** This was a reference to Christ's sacrificial death" (cf. Rom. 3:5; 4:25; Mark 10:45; 2 Cor. 5:21). This concept of sacrifice, an innocent life given in place of a guilty life, goes back to

1. Leviticus 1-7
2. possibly Exodus 12 (the Passover lamb)
3. was theologically applied to Jesus in Isa. 53:4-6
4. It is developed in a Christological sense in the book of Hebrews (cf. chaps. 9-10). Hebrews in effect compares the Old and New Testament at a number of points.

SPECIAL TOPIC: BLOOD

▣ **"we shall be saved"** This is FUTURE PASSIVE INDICATIVE (cf. Rom. 5:10). This referred to our ultimate salvation, which is called "glorification" (cf. Rom. 5:2; 8:30, 1 John 3:2).

The NT describes salvation in all VERB tenses.

1. a completed act (AORIST), Acts 15:11; Rom. 8:24; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5
2. past act resulting in a present state (PERFECT), Eph. 2:5,8
3. progressive process (PRESENT), 1 Cor. 1:18; 15:2; 2 Cor. 2:15; 1 Thess. 4:14; 1 Pet. 3:21
4. future consummation (FUTURE), Rom. 5:9,10; 10:9.

SPECIAL TOPIC: GREEK VERB TENSES USED FOR SALVATION

Salvation starts with an initial decision (cf. Rom. 10:9-13; John 1:12; 3:16) but progresses into a moment-by-moment relationship that will one day be consummated. This concept is often described by the three theological terms.

1. justification, which means "being delivered from the penalty of sin"
2. sanctification, which means "being delivered from the power of sin"
3. glorification, which means "being delivered from the presence of sin"

It is worth noting that justification and sanctification are both gracious acts of God, given to the believer through faith in Christ. However the NT also speaks of sanctification as an ongoing process of Christlikeness. For this reason theologians speak of "positional sanctification" and

"progressive sanctification." This is the mystery of a free salvation linked to a godly life! Justification must never be separated from sanctification!

SPECIAL TOPIC: SANCTIFICATION

▣ **"from the wrath *of God*"** This is an eschatological context. The Bible tells of God's great, undeserved, unmerited love, but also clearly tells of God's settled opposition to sin and rebellion. God has provided a way of salvation and forgiveness through Christ, but those who reject Him are under wrath (cf. Rom. 1:18-3:20). This is an anthropomorphic phrase, but it expresses a reality. It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of an angry God (Heb. 10:31).

SPECIAL TOPIC: GOD DESCRIBED AS HUMAN

5:10 "if" This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which is assumed true from the writer's perspective or for his literary purposes. Humanity, God's ultimate creation (cf. Gen. 1:26-27), became an enemy! Mankind had a desire for independent self-control, a desire to be gods (cf. Gen. 3:5).

▣ **"we were reconciled to God. . .having been reconciled"** This is both an AORIST PASSIVE INDICATIVE and an AORIST PASSIVE PARTICIPLE. The VERB "reconciled" (cf. 1 Cor. 7:11; 2 Cor. 5:18,19,20; also note Col. 1:20) originally meant "to exchange." God has exchanged our sin for Jesus' righteousness (cf. Isa. 53:4-6). Peace is restored (cf. Rom. 5:1)!

SPECIAL TOPIC: PEACE (NT)

SPECIAL TOPIC: PEACE (OT)

▣ **"through the death of His son"** The gospel of forgiveness is grounded in

1. the love of God (cf. John 3:16)
2. the work of Christ (8:32; Gal. 1:4; 2:20)
3. the wooing of the Spirit (John 6:44,65),
4. the faith/repentant response of an individual (Mark 1:15; John 1:12; Acts 20:21)

There is no other way to be right with God (cf. Rom. 10:1-2,7-8; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5). Assurance of salvation is based on the character of the Triune God (cf. Exod. 34:6; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 103:8; 145:8), not human performance! The paradox is that human performance after salvation is an evidence of a free salvation (cf. James and 1 John).

SPECIAL TOPIC: SON OF GOD

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHRISTIAN ASSURANCE

▣ **"we shall be saved"** The NT speaks of salvation as past, present, and future. Here the future referred to our ultimate, complete salvation at the Second Coming (cf. 1 John 3:2). See note at Rom. 5:9.

SPECIAL TOPIC: GREEK VERB TENSES USED FOR SALVATION

▣ **"by His life"** This Greek term for life is *zōē*. This term in John's writings always referred to resurrection life, eternal life, or kingdom life. Paul also used it in this theological sense. The thrust of this context is that since God paid such a high price for believers' forgiveness He will surely continue its effectiveness.

"Life" can refer to either

1. Jesus' resurrection (cf. Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 15)
2. Jesus' intercessory work (cf. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1)
3. the Spirit forming Christ in us (cf. Rom. 8:29; Gal. 4:19)

Paul asserted that Jesus' earthly life and death as well as His exalted life (ascension, Acts 1) are the basis of our reconciliation.

5:11 "And not only this, but" See note at verse 3.

▣ **"we also exult"** See note at Rom. 5:2. This is the third use of "exult" (boast) in this context.

1. exult in the hope of glory, Rom. 5:2
2. exult in tribulation, Rom. 5:3
3. exult in reconciliation, Rom. 5:11

Negative boasting is seen in Rom. 2:17 and 23!

▣ **"we have now received the reconciliation"** This is an AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE, a completed act. Believers' reconciliation ("to exchange") is also discussed in Rom. 5:10 and 2 Cor. 5:18-21; Eph. 2:16-22; Col. 1:19-23. In this context "reconciliation" is the theological synonym of "justification."

For "receive" see SPECIAL TOPIC: RECEIVE

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 5:12-14

[12]Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned- [13]for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. [14]Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

5:12 "Therefore" Romans has several strategically placed "therefores" (cf. Rom. 5:1; 8:1; 12:1). The interpretive question is to what they relate. They could be a way of referring to Paul's whole argument. For sure this one relates to Genesis and, therefore, probably back to Rom. 1:18-32.

▣ **"as through one man sin entered into the world"** All three VERBS in Rom. 5:12 are AORIST TENSE. Adam's fall brought death (cf. 1 Cor. 15:21-22). The Bible does not dwell on the origin of sin. Sin also apparently occurred in the angelic realm (cf. Gen. 3 and Rev. 12:7-9). How and when are uncertain (cf. Isa. 14:12-27; Ezek. 28:12-19; Daniel 10; Job 4:18; Matt. 25:41; Luke 10:18; John 12:31; Rev. 12:7-9).

Adam's sin involved two aspects.

1. disobedience to a specific commandment (cf. Gen. 2:16-17)
2. self-oriented pride (cf. Gen. 3:5-6)

This continues the allusion to Genesis 3 begun in Rom. 1:18-32.

It is the theology of sin that so clearly separates Paul from rabbinical thought. The rabbis did not focus on Genesis 3; they asserted instead, that there were two "intents" (*yetzers*) in every person. Their famous rabbinical saying "In every man's heart is a black and a white dog. The one you feed the most becomes the biggest." Paul saw sin as a major barrier between holy God and His creation. Paul was not a systematic theologian (cf. James Steward's *A Man in Christ*). He gave several origins of sin (1) Adam's fall, (2) satanic temptation, and (3) continuing human rebellion (i.e., Eph. 2:2-3; James 4:1,4,7).

In the theological contrasts and parallels between Adam and Jesus in Rom. 5:12-21, two implications are present.

1. Adam was a real historical person.
2. Jesus was a real human being.

Both of these truths affirm the Bible in the face of false teaching. Notice the repeated use of "one man" or "the one." These two ways of referring to Adam and Jesus are used eleven times in this context.

▣ **"one man"** This generic phrase (lit. *henos anthrōpou*) is used to represent Adam (Rom. 5:12,16,17,18,19) or Jesus (Rom. 5:15 [twice], 17 [twice], 18,19). They each represent a group or community (i.e., "many," cf. Rom. 5:15 [twice], 19[twice]; "all," cf. Rom. 5:12,13,18 [twice]).

▣ **"death through sin"** Augustine first coined the term "original sin." It describes the consequences of Adam/Eve's choices in Genesis 3. Their rebellion has affected all of creation. Humans are impacted by

1. a fallen world system
2. a personal tempter
3. a fallen nature

Original sin (Rom. 5:12-14,16a,17) forms a partnership with personal sin (Rom. 5:12d,16b) to make all humans sinful! Sin results in "death" (cf. Rom. 1:32; 6:13,16,21,23; 7:5,9,10,11,13,24; 8:13).

The Jerome Biblical Commentary (p. 308) mentions the rabbinical tradition that there were three periods of history.

1. Adam – Moses
2. Moses – Messiah
3. Messiah – eschaton

If Paul was thinking of these divisions then

1. Adam – Moses (original sin, no law but death)
2. Moses – Messiah (personal sin, violation of law)
3. Messiah – (freedom from the Law/law through grace)

▣ **"death spread to all men"** The major thrust of this paragraph is the universality of the consequences of sin (cf. Rom. 5:16-19; 1 Cor. 15:22; Gal. 1:10), which is death.

1. spiritual death – Gen. 2:17; 3:1-24; Isa. 59:2; Rom. 7:10-11; Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13; James 1:15
2. physical death – Gen. 3:4-5; 5:1-32
3. eternal death – Rev. 2:11; 20:6,14; 21:8

▣ **"because all sinned"** All humans sin in Adam corporately (i.e., inherited a sinful state and a sinful propensity.) Because of this each person chooses to sin personally and repeatedly. The Bible is emphatic that all humans are sinners both corporately and individually (cf. Gen. 6:5,12-13; 8:21; 1 Kgs. 8:46; 2 Chr. 6:36; Job 4:17; 9:2; 15:14-16; 25:4; Ps. 14:1,3; 51:5; 130:3; 143:2; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20; Isa. 53:6; Rom. 3:9,19,23; 11:32; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:2-3; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8-10).

Yet it must be said that the contextual emphasis (cf. Rom. 5:15-19) is that one act caused death (Adam) and one act causes life (Jesus). However, God has so structured His relationship to humanity that human volition is a significant aspect of "lostness" and "justification." Humans are volitionally involved in their future destinies! They continue to choose sin or they choose Christ.

The translation "because" is common, but its meaning is often disputed. Paul used *eph' hō* in 2 Cor. 5:4; Phil. 3:12; and 4:10 in the sense of "because." Thus each and every human chooses to personally participate in sin and rebellion against God. Some by rejecting special revelation, but all by rejecting natural revelation (cf. Rom. 1:18-3:20).

5:13-14 This same truth is taught in Rom. 3:20; 4:15 and Acts 17:30. God is fair. Humans are only responsible for what is available to them. This verse is speaking exclusively of special revelation (OT, Jesus, NT), not natural revelation (Ps. 19:1-6; Rom. 1:18-23; 2:11-16).

Notice that the NKJV sees the comparison of Rom. 5:12 as separated by a long parenthesis (cf. Rom. 5:13-17) from its conclusion in Rom. 5:18-21.

5:14

NASB, NKJV, NJB, Peshitta	**"death reigned"**
NRSV	**"death exercised dominion"**

TEV	**"death ruled"**
REB	**"death held sway"**

Death reigned as a King (cf. Rom. 5:17 and 21). This personification of death and sin as tyrants is sustained throughout this chapter and Romans 6. The universal experience of death confirms the universal sin of mankind. In verses 17 and 21, grace is personified. Grace reigns! Humans have a choice (the two ways of the OT, i.e., death or life, cf. Deut. 11:26; 30:1,19; Psalm 1), death or life. Who reigns in your life?

▣ **"even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offence of Adam"** Adam violated a stated command of God (i.e., Gen. 2:15-17), even Eve did not sin in this same way. She heard from Adam about the tree, not from God directly. Humans from Adam until Moses were affected by Adam's rebellion! They did not violate a specific command from God, but 1:18-32, which is surely part of this theological context, expresses the truth that they did violate the light that they had from creation and are thereby responsible to God for rebellion/sin. Adam's sinful propensity spread to all of his children.

▣

NASB, NKJV, NRSV	**"who is a type of Him who was to come"**
TEV	**"Adam was a figure of the one who was to come"**
NJB	**"Adam prefigured the One to come"**
REB	**"and Adam foreshadowed the man who was to come"**
Peshitta	**"by Adam who is the likeness of him that was to come"**

This expresses in a very concrete way the Adam-Christ typology (cf. 1 Cor. 15:21-22,45-49; Phil. 2:6-8). Both of them are seen as the first in a series, the origin of a race (cf. 1 Cor. 15:45-49). Adam is the only person from the OT specifically called a "type" by the NT (for "Israel" see 1 Cor. 10:6).

SPECIAL TOPIC: FORM (*TUPOS*)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 5:15-17

15But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. 16The gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment *arose* from one *transgression* resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift *arose* from many transgressions resulting in justification. 17For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

5:15-19 This is a sustained argument using parallel phrases. The NASB, NRSV, and TEV divide the paragraph at Rom. 5:18. However UBS^4, NKJV, and JB translate it as a unit. Remember the key to interpretation of the original author's intent is one main truth per paragraph.

Notice that the term "many," Rom. 5:15 and 19, is synonymous with "all" in Rom. 5:12 and 18. This is also true in Isa. 53:11-12 and Rom. 5:6. No theological distinctions (Calvin's elect versus non-elect) should be made based on these terms!

SPECIAL TOPIC: ELECTION/PREDESTINATION AND THE NEED FOR A THEOLOGICAL BALANCE

5:15 "the free gift" There are two different Greek words for "gift" used in this context—*charisma*, Rom. 5:15,16 (Rom. 6:23) and *dorea/dorama*, Rom. 5:15, 16, 17 (see note at Rom. 3:24)—but they are synonymous. This is really the Good News about salvation. It is a free gift from God through Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 3:24; 6:23; Eph. 2:8,9) to all who believe in Christ.

▣ **"if"** This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which is assumed to be true from the author's perspective or for his literary purposes. Adam's sin brought death to all humans. This is paralleled in Rom. 5:17.

▣ **"abound"** See SPECIAL TOPIC: ABOUND

5:16 "condemnation. . .justification" Both of these are forensic, legal terms. Often the OT presented the prophet's message as a court scene. Paul uses this form (cf. Rom. 8:1, 31-34).

5:17 "if" This is another FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which is assumed to be true from the author's perspective or for his literary purposes. The transgression of Adam did result in the death of all humans.

▣ **"much more those who receive"** Verses 18-19 are not exactly theologically balanced. This phrase cannot be removed from the context of Romans 1-8 and used as a proof-text for universalism (that all will be saved eventually). Humans must receive (Rom. 5:17b) God's offer in Christ. Salvation is available to all, but must be accepted individually (cf. John 1:12; 3:16; Rom. 10:9-13).

Adam's one act of rebellion issued in the total rebellion of all humans. The one sinful act is magnified! But in Christ one righteous sacrifice is magnified to cover the many individual sins as well as the corporate affect of sin. The "much more" of Christ's act is emphasized (cf. Rom. 5:9,10,15,17). Grace abounds!

SPECIAL TOPIC: RECEIVE

SPECIAL TOPIC: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "RECEIVE," "BELIEVE," "CONFESS/PROFESS," "CALL UPON"?

5:17,18 "the gift of righteousness will reign in life. . .justification of life" Jesus is God's gift (cf. Rom. 3:24; 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9) and provision for all of fallen mankind's spiritual needs (cf. 1 Cor. 1:30). These parallel phrases can mean

1. sinful mankind is given right standing with God through Christ's finished work which results in a "godly life"
2. this phrase is synonymous to "eternal life"

The context supports the first option.

The VERB "reign" is used several times in this context.

1. "death reigned from Adam to Moses," Rom. 5:14 (AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE)
2. "death reigned through the one," Rom. 5:17 (AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE)
3. "much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life," Rom. 5:17 (FUTURE ACTIVE INDICATIVE)
4. "sin reigned in death," Rom. 5:21 (AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE)
5. "grace would reign," Rom. 5:21 (AORIST ACTIVE SUBMUNCTIVE)
6. "do not let sin reign," Rom. 6:12 (PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE)

Paul's personification of sin and death versus the gift of grace is a powerful way to express the theological truth!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 5:18-21

[18]So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so

through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. [19]For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. [20]The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, [21]so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

5:18

NASB "even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men"
NKJV "even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men"
NRSV "so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all"
TEV "in the same way the one righteous act set all men free and gives them life"
NJB "so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified"
REB "so the result of one righteous act is acquittal and life for all"
Peshitta "even so by the righteousness of one man will the victory to life be to all men"

This is not saying that everyone will be saved (universalism). This verse can not be interpreted apart from the message of the book of Romans and the immediate context. This is referring to the potential salvation of all humans through Jesus' life/death/resurrection (i.e., the universal offer). Mankind must respond to the gospel offer by repentance and faith (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21). God always takes the initiative (cf. John 6:44,65), but He has chosen that each individual must respond personally (cf. Matt. 11:28-29; John 1:12; 3:16; and Rom. 10:9-13). His offer is universal (cf. 1 Tim. 2:4,6; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 2:2), but the mystery of iniquity is that many say "no."

The "act of righteousness" is either

1. Jesus' entire life of obedience and teaching fully revealed the Father
2. specifically His death on sinful mankind's behalf

As one man's life affected all (Jewish corporality, cf. Genesis 3; Joshua 7), so too, one innocent life affected all (Leviticus 1-7,16). These two acts are parallel, but not equal. All are affected by Adam's sin but all are only potentially affected by Jesus' life, only believers who receive the gift of justification are saved. Jesus' act also affects all human sin, for those who believe and receive; past, present, and future!

5:18-19 "condemnation to all men. . .justification of life to all men. . .the many were made sinners. . .the many will be made righteous" These are parallel phrases which show that the term "many" is not restrictive but inclusive. This same parallelism is found in Isa. 53:6 "all" and 53:11,12 "many." The term "many" cannot be used in a restrictive sense to limit God's offer of salvation to all mankind (Augustine's and Calvin's elect versus non-elect).

Notice the PASSIVE VOICE of the two verVERBSbs. They refer to the activity of God. Humans sin in relationship to God's character (a standard violated) and they are justified in relation to His character (a gift of His grace).

5:19 "one man's disobedience. . .the obedience of the One" Paul was using the theological concept of Old Testament corporality. One person's acts affected the whole community (cf. Achan

in Joshua 7). Adam and Eve's disobedience brought about the judgment of God on all creation (cf. Genesis 3). All creation has been affected by the consequences of Adam's rebellion (cf. Rom. 8:18-25). The world is not the same. Humans are not the same. Death became the end of all earthly life (cf. Genesis 5). This is not the world that God intended it to be!

In this same corporate sense Jesus' one act of obedience, Calvary, resulted in

1. a new age
2. a new people
3. a new covenant

This representative theology is called "the Adam-Christ typology" (cf. 1 Cor. 5:21-22; Phil. 2:6). Jesus is the second Adam. He is the new beginning for the fallen human race.

▣ **"made righteous"** See SPECIAL TOPIC: RIGHTEOUSNESS

5:20

NASB	**"And the Law came in that the transgression might increase"**
NKJV	**"Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound"**
NRSV	**"But law came in, with the result and the trespass multiplied"**
TEV	**"Law was introduced in order to increase wrongdoing"**
NJB	**"When law came, it was to multiply the opportunities of falling"**
REB	**"The introduction of the law caused sin to increase"**
Peshitta	**"Law intruded into this process to multiply law-breaking"**

The purpose of the Law was never to save mankind but to show fallen mankind's need and helplessness (cf. Galatians 3; Eph. 2:1-3) and thereby bring them to Christ (cf. Rom. 3:20; 4:15; 7:5; Gal. 3:19, 23-26). The Law is good, but mankind is sinful (cf. Romans 7)!

SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S VIEW OF THE MOSAIC LAW

▣ **"grace abounded all the more"** This was Paul's main thrust in this section. Sin is horrible and pervasive, but grace abounds and exceeds its deadly influence! This was a way to encourage the first century fledgling church. They were overcomers in Christ (cf. Rom. 5:9-11; 8:31-39; 1 John 5:4). This is not a license to sin more!

SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S USE OF *HUPER* COMPOUNDS

SPECIAL TOPIC: ABOUND

5:21 Both "sin" and "grace" are personified as kings. Sin reigned by the power of universal death (Rom. 5:14, 17). Grace reigns through the power of imputed righteousness through the finished work of Jesus Christ and believers' personal faith and repentant response to the gospel.

As God's new people, as Christ's body, Christians also reign with Christ (cf. Rom. 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 22:5). This can be seen as an earthly or millennial reign (cf. Rev. 5:9-10; 20). The Bible also speaks of the same truth by asserting that the Kingdom has been given to the saints (cf. Matt. 5:3,10; Luke 12:32; Eph. 2:5-6).

SPECIAL TOPIC: REIGNING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Define God's "righteousness."
2. What is the theological distinction between "positional sanctification" and "progressive possession"?
3. Are we saved by grace or faith (cf. Eph. 2:8-9)?
4. Why do Christians suffer?
5. Are we saved or being saved or will be saved?
6. Are we sinners because we sin, or do we sin because we are sinners?
7. How are the terms "justified," "saved," and "reconciled" related in this chapter?
8. Why does God hold me responsible for another man's sin who lived thousands of years ago (Rom. 5:12-21)?
9. Why did everyone die between Adam and Moses if sin was not counted during this period (Rom. 5:13-14)?
10. Are the terms "all" and "many" synonymous (Rom. 5:18-19, Is. 53:6, 11-12)?

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